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INCREASING STUDENTS' GRAMMAR UNDERSTANDING USING LITERATURE : CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH AT MAN 1 PROBOLINGGO

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan tata bahasa (grammar skill) siswa melalui pembelajaran berbasis literatur di MAN 1 Probolinggo. Dengan menggunakan Classroom Action Research (CAR), diperolah bahwa rata-rata pretest sebesar 32,27 meningkat menjadi 47,73 pada posttest, atai terjadi peningkatan sebesar 47,9%. Peningkatan ini membuktikan bahwa penerapan literature-based instruction mampu membantu siswa memahami penggunaan simple present, simple past, dan present continuous tense secara kontekstual. Pembelajaran melalui lagu seperti Drunk Text, Cars Outside, dan Photograph juga meningkatkan motivasi dan keterlibatan siswa selama proses belajar. Dengan demikian, pembelajaran berbasis literatur terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan tata bahasa dan minat belajar siswa terhadap bahasa Inggris.
Kata Kunci: Grammar, Literature-Based Instruction, Motivation, English Learning, Classroom Action Research.

Abstract

This study aims to improve students' grammar skills through literature-based instruction at MAN 1 Probolinggo. This research employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. The participants consisted of 11 eleventh-grade students selected purposively. Data were collected through grammar tests administered before and after the intervention, supported by classroom documentation. The findings revealed that the students' average pretest score (32.27) increased to 47.73 in the posttest, showing an improvement of 47.9%. This result indicates that literature-based instruction effectively enhances students' understanding of grammatical structures—particularly simple present, simple past, and present continuous tenses—through contextual learning. The use of song lyrics such as Drunk Text, Cars Outside, and Photograph also fostered motivation and engagement throughout the lessons. Therefore, literature-based instruction is proven to be an effective approach to improving students' grammar achievement and interest in English learning.
Keywords: Grammar, Literature-Based Instruction, Motivation, English Learning, Classroom Action Research.

INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most widely used languages in global communication, particularly in academic, technological, and professional contexts. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language from primary to tertiary education. However, despite years of instruction, many students still demonstrate low proficiency in English, especially in grammar, which serves as the fundamental structure for accurate and effective communication (Musfirah Jaya & Jabri, 2025). Indonesian learners often find difficulty applying grammatical rules in

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speaking and writing, resulting in errors and lack of fluency ((Souisa & Yanuarius, 2020); (Komara & Tiarsiwi, 2021)).

These persistent problems are strongly influenced by conventional teaching methods that focus on rote memorization and mechanical practice rather than meaningful communication. Teacher-centered approaches limit students' opportunities to engage with grammar in realistic language use, making lessons monotonous and discouraging ((Robertson, 2018)). Other obstacles such as limited instructional resources, insufficient contextual materials, and low student motivation also contribute to ineffective grammar learning. Consequently, students perceive grammar as abstract and irrelevant to real-life communication, which leads to decreased interest in mastering it ((Komara & Tiarsiwi, 2021)).

To address these issues, integrating literature into grammar teaching presents a promising alternative. Literature provides authentic language input, cultural values, and engaging content that stimulates emotional and cognitive involvement. Through exposure to short stories, poems, novels, or drama, and songs students can observe and internalize grammatical structures in natural contexts, which supports better understanding compared to explicit rule-based instruction ((Sharma, n.d.); (Noviadi et al., 2023)). Research has shown that literature not only improves language competence but also increases motivation and participation ((JATAU STEPHEN, et al., 2025); (Panjaitan et al., 2024)). Teachers also acknowledge that literature-based learning enhances cultural awareness, creativity, and critical thinking ((Arafah & ., 2019)).

Motivation itself is a key factor contributing to success in language learning. Highly motivated students tend to be more persistent and achieve better results ((Mustadi et al., 2022)). When grammar learning is engaging and meaningful—such as through literature-based activities—students show greater interest and active involvement, which strengthens learning outcomes ((Christidamayani & Kristanto, 2020)). Therefore, integrating literature into grammar instruction meets pedagogical needs by enhancing both linguistic competence and motivation.

Based on the problems and theoretical support above, this classroom action research aims to improve students' grammar achievement through literature-based instruction at MAN 1 Probolinggo. The research focuses on embedding grammar instruction within literary texts to strengthen comprehension and practical application while increasing student engagement. Thus, the research questions formulated are: (1) How does literature-based instruction affect students' grammar achievement? and (2) How can grammar be effectively taught using literature-based instruction to enhance students' performance?

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design that aimed to measure the effectiveness of literature-based instruction in improving students's grammar skills. An experimental approach using a one-group pretest–posttest design was implemented to determine the extent of learning improvement after the treatment. Students were given a grammar pretest before the instructional intervention and a posttest after the treatment to evaluate the progress in their grammar performance.

The research was conducted at MAN 1 Probolinggo during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants consisted of 11 second-grade students selected through purposive sampling based on their low grammar achievement in the previous semester. The researcher took the role of the classroom teacher, while an English teacher from the school served as a collaborator to assist in validating the observation results and reflection process throughout the intervention.

The study followed three main stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. In the pretest stage, students were assessed on their initial understanding and ability in applying grammatical structures, particularly the simple present, simple past, and present continuous tenses. The treatment phase was conducted using literature-based instruction, in which short stories, poems, and song lyrics such as Drunk Text, Cars Outside, and Photograph were utilized as learning materials. Students were encouraged to identify grammatical features within authentic contexts, rewrite incorrect sentences, and complete structured grammar exercises derived from the literary content. After the series of instructional activities, the posttest was administered with equivalent

format and difficulty level as the pretest to measure the improvement in students' grammar mastery.

Data were collected using grammar tests as the primary instrument, consisting of the pretest and posttest to evaluate learning outcomes. Supporting data were obtained through documentation, including lesson plans, classroom photographs, and samples of students' written work. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive statistical techniques to compute the mean scores of both tests and the percentage of improvement resulting from the literature-based instruction.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
A. RESULT

This research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of literature-based instruction in improving students' grammar achievement at MAN 1 Probolinggo. Data were obtained through pretest and posttest scores from 11 students of the eleventh grade. The results are presented in the following table.

Tabel 1. Data Analysis

Statistic	Pretest	Posttest	Improvement
Mean	32.27	47.73	15.45
Minimum	10	25	10
Maximum	50	70	25
Standard Deviation	14.03	17.37	5.22

The findings indicate a substantial increase in students' grammar performance after the treatment. The mean pretest score was 32.27, which rose to 47.73 on the posttest. The average improvement of 15.45 points demonstrates the positive effect of the instructional intervention. All students exhibited improvement, with the highest gain recorded by Neva Setya Wulandari (25 points) and the lowest by several students who improved by 10 points (e.g., M. Saiful Bahri, Riski Romadhoni, and Salman Farisi).
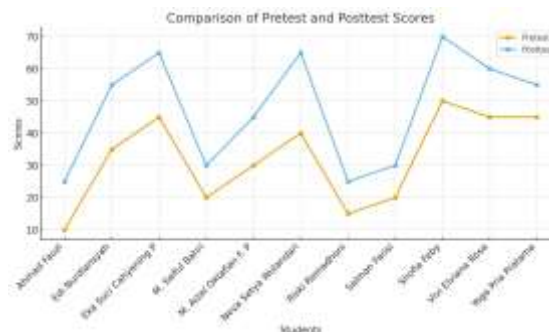

Figure 1. Graphic picture

The comparison between pretest and posttest results is visualized in Figure 1. The figure clearly shows an upward trend across all participants, where posttest scores consistently exceed pretest results, reflecting overall learning progress.

B. DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that literature-based instruction significantly enhances students' grammar achievement. The consistent improvement among all participants indicates that exposure to contextualized grammar through literary texts helps students understand grammar rules more meaningfully.

Students' increased scores reflect a transition from basic to intermediate understanding, as they engaged with authentic examples of grammar in use. For instance, literary passages expose learners to varied sentence structures, tenses, and stylistic elements, encouraging internalization of grammatical concepts beyond rote memorization.

The highest improvement (25 points) shown by Neva Setya Wulandari and Eka Suci Cahyaning P. (20 points) might be attributed to active engagement and higher reading

comprehension. Conversely, those with smaller gains (10 points) may have faced challenges such as limited vocabulary knowledge, lower motivation, or less exposure to literature outside the classroom. These variations underline the importance of individual learning differences in language acquisition.

The results show that all students experienced improvement in their grammar performance after being taught through literature-based instruction. The mean posttest score increased by approximately 47.9% compared to the pretest mean. This improvement indicates that integrating literature into grammar instruction significantly enhances students' grammatical understanding and performance.

Students showed higher engagement and enthusiasm during the learning process. The use of literary texts—specifically song lyrics such as Drunk Text, Cars Outside, and Photograph—helped them identify and apply grammatical patterns (simple present, simple past, and present continuous tenses) in meaningful contexts. Activities such as sentence correction and rewriting exercises based on literary content made grammar practice more authentic and enjoyable.

These findings are consistent with (Arafah & ., 2019) and (Sharma, n.d.), who emphasized that teaching grammar through literature increases linguistic competence while fostering motivation and creativity. Similarly, (JATAU STEPHEN, et al., 2025) found that literary materials serve as motivating tools that enrich students' exposure to natural language use. The contextual and emotional connection provided by literature enables students to internalize grammar more effectively than through traditional rule-based methods.

In conclusion, literature-based instruction positively influences students' grammar achievement by providing contextual, meaningful, and engaging learning experiences. It bridges the gap between linguistic knowledge and real language use, aligning with communicative and student-centered pedagogies in English language teaching.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that literature-based instruction effectively improves students' grammar achievement at MAN 1 Probolinggo. The average score increased significantly from 32.27 in the pretest to 47.73 in the posttest, showing substantial progress in students' mastery of grammar, particularly in the use of simple present, simple past, and present continuous tenses.

the quantitative results reveal that literature-based instruction produced measurable gains in students' grammar proficiency. All participants improved their scores, with the group average increasing by more than 15 points. The consistent upward trend across the dataset confirms that the method was effective and pedagogically beneficial. Future studies may include a control group or a larger sample size to further validate the effectiveness of this approach across different proficiency levels and learning environments

The use of literary texts such as songs made grammar learning more meaningful and less monotonous. Students became more active, confident, and motivated to participate in class activities. These findings imply that literature can be used as an alternative medium in grammar teaching to foster not only linguistic accuracy but also creativity and cultural awareness.

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